

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-12

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FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3069

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S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0421

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR

SUBJ: MBFR: QUESTIONS ON EASTERN FIGURES FOR SOVIET AND
POLISH MAJOR FORMATIONS

REF: A. STATE 170928 (DTG 062319Z JUL 78)

B. MBFR VIENNA 416 (DTG 071911Z JUL 78)

1. IN VIEW OF DECISION HERE (REFTEL B) TO POSTPONE USE OF
QUESTIONS IN REFTEL A, WE REQUEST WASHINGTON RECONSIDERATION
OF THE "ILLUSTRATIVE" FIGURES TO BE USED FOR SOVIET AND
POLISH DIVISIONS CONTAINED IN REFTEL A.

2. BECAUSE THE FIGURE OF "ROUGHLY 100,000" EXCEEDS ALL KNOWN
WESTERN ESTIMATES FOR POLISH DIVISIONS, IT LENDS ITSELF TOO
READILY TO AN EASTERN RESPONSE THAT WILL BRING THE AVERAGE
MANNING LEVEL ISSUE TO THE FOREFRONT AND WILL IN ADDITION
GIVE UNNECESSARY CREDIBILITY TO EASTERN STATEMENTS TO THIS
TOPIC. IN USING THE FIGURES IN THE TWO QUESTIONS, WE WANT TO BE
IN A POSITION TO SAY THAT MANNING LEVELS HAVE ALREADY BEEN
TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT IN DEALING WITH
THE EAST THE WEST SHOULD AVOID GIVING THE IMPRESSION THAT
WESTERN ESTIMATES ARE HIGHER THAN THEY ARE. LOWER FIGURES
WOULD OF COURSE LEND GREATER WEIGHT TO THE POINT TO BE MADE

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BY THE TWO QUESTIONS, THAT IS, EASTERN FIGURES FOR SOVIET AND
POLISH MAJOR FORMATIONS ARE NOT CREDIBLE WHEN VIEWED EITHER IN
THE LIGHT OF KNOWN DATA, OR OF STATEMENTS MADE BY EASTERN REPRESENTATIVES IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS.

3. WE THEREFORE SUGGEST THE TEXT CITED IN PARA 4, REFTEL A BE
AMENDED TO READ, "EVEN ALLOWING FOR THE VARYING STRENGTHS OF

THESE DIVISIONS, THEY WOULD AMOUNT TO ABOUT 85,000-95,000 MEN.
IT DOES NOT SEEM POSSIBLE THAT THE REMAINING 20,000-30,000 MEN
WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO ACCOUNT FOR ALL OF THE PERSONNEL OF OTHER
UNITS, SUBUNITS, FORMATIONS, AND COMMANDS DESCRIBED ON THE
LIST. WE WOULD INVITE YOUR COMMENTS ON THIS TOPIC."

4. AS FOR THE SOVIET NUMBER WE WOULD ALSO PREFER TO PRESENT
THE FIGURE FOR SOVIET MANPOWER IN DIVISIONS USING A RANGE,
AS SO DOING WOULD MOVE IN THE DIRECTION OF CURRENT US FIGURES,
AND WOULD ALSO TO SOME EXTENT DEFUSE THE AML ISSUE. THAT
IS WE PROPOSE THAT INSTEAD OF "ROUGHLY 300,000" WE USE
"ABOUT 290,00 - 300,000" AND "...ABOUT 45,000 - 55,000..."
INSTEAD OF "... ROUGHLY 45,000 MEN."

5. WE UNDERSTAND THE BASIS FOR WASHINGTON CONCERN OVER THESE
QUESTIONS ABOUT BELIEVE THAT THIS NEW TEXT MOVES IN THE DIRECTION
OF THAT CONCERN WHILE MAKING FOR MORE TELLING STATEMENTS.
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